

Our Vision:
Live Simple
Live Well
Live Healthy
Live Happy

Trust Activities from September 2016 - December 2016

Faith

A talk by Dr Robert Svoboda at Vaidayagrama on November 24, 2016

The challenges of living in the modern world are many. In particular it has become harder than ever to have faith in anything at all. Bereft of faith, we are less healthy, less stable, less resilient, and the complexity around us is therefore more successful at dividing our attention and distracting our focus. When unfocused, prāna, our life force, is more likely to become scattered, stuck, or abnormally circulated. When our prāna is disturbed, we are most prone to falling ill.

One of the two most common Sanskrit words for “faith” is the word vishvāsa, which literally means a specialized (vi) form of breathing (shvāsa). Ordinary breathing replenishes our prāna several times a minute, and “specialized breathing” moves that replenished prāna in the direction of whatever we have faith in. Prāna, breath and attention always move together, so wherever our attention goes, our prāna goes as well. When we have faith in something or someone, prāna, breath and attention move in the direction of that person or thing with ease; the same ease will then be promoted in all our other movements, mental and physical.

The second word for faith is shraddhā, which is derived from the Sanskrit root hrd, meaning “heart”. To have faith is thus to “put your heart” into something, and since the heart circulates prāna throughout the body via the blood, that faith will consequently be distributed to every cell in the body. When we have faith in a remedy, at least part of the effect the remedy will offer is due to our faith in it; we may in fact never know if it was the remedy that did the job, or the faith. A patient who has faith in something is already halfway healed; this could be faith in the doctor’s skill, the nurse’s care, the medicine’s efficacy, or the body’s ability to recover. Faith in the guru, the personal deity, Providence, or the Supreme Reality will also do the job.

Focusing prāna helps us to develop faith, and faith helps us to focus prāna, creating a “virtuous cycle” of mutual reinforcement. Health is a product of good flow of prāna in the body, and having some kind of daily practice dedicated to prāna circulation is a good way to remain well.

Sādhana is a word often used in conjunction with, or interchangeable with the concept of daily practice; in fact that word means an expedient, any means of accomplishing a desired result. Applied to health, a sādhana is a form of self-cultivation of prāna, involving actions that require you to focus your prāna on that thing you are trying to achieve, thereby generating a sufficient concentration of prāna to facilitate change.

What applies to the microcosm also applies to the macrocosm.

If, for example, we are in danger of losing faith in the political process, or in society as a whole, we can focus instead on circulating and cultivating prāna in our families and neighborhoods. No action is ever in vain. Even when a situation seems most dire, we should never surrender our faith. Not blind faith, but clear-eyed faith is needed, the kind that knows that satyameva jāyate, “truth alone triumphs”, even if that triumph is difficult to perceive from where we are now.

It is always darkest before the dawn, and as we in the Northern Hemisphere move toward the winter solstice (the day that is the year’s darkest) let us conclude with the words of the Prince of Peace: “Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

<http://www.drsvoboda.com/>



Tree plantation

Uday Andhare, was a patient at Vaidyagrama in Oct- Nov 2017. He is one of the early people who had seen the dry barren land of Vaidyagrama of the earlier years. Now on his visit to Vaidyagrama after a gap of 10 years, he is very happy to see the growth of the eco-friendly green healing village.



First Saturday Community Lunch and Medical Camp at Rottigoundanur

On the first Saturday of each month, free medical camps are organized by Punarnava Ayurveda Trust and Vaidyagrama Community Trust. At November's camp, held on the 5th day, beneficiaries of Annam were brought to the camp from far away villages. There, as well as a sumptuous lunch, they received medicines for their ailments. In all, 200 people partook of the community lunch, which was lovingly prepared by the kitchens at Purnarnava.



The community lunch at Rottigoundanur, as well as feeding the poor, has the added purpose of bringing the villagers together for the day. Many villagers are divided by caste, creed and social status. At the monthly camp, all the villagers sit next to each other, irrespective of these factors; caste divide is immaterial, and a wholesome lunch is enjoyed equally by all villagers. Regardless of background, their need for warmth, companionship, food and medical attention is the same!



A Talk by The Humane Animal Society

Humane Animal Society (HAS) was started in 2006 to address the animal welfare needs of Coimbatore and to carry out the critical function of Animal Birth Control. The HAS works towards the rehabilitation and betterment of injured, abandoned and neglected animals. HAS creates awareness, advocates equal rights and safeguards the welfare of these animals.

Dr Mini (Managing Trustee) and Alphonse (Program Manager), from the HAS at Coimbatore came to meet the villagers of Rottigoundanur and gave a talk about the need to care for the stray animals of the village. The animals, like humans, have needs, like hunger and illness, and are reliant on the villagers amongst whom they live, for loving care and proper attention. The talk was received well by the people.



Ayur Aroghya Soukhya

Daily Satsangs and interactions create wellness in the Community as a whole.

Patients at Vaidyagrama have the opportunity to attend many of satsangs, both with the Punarnava doctors and with volunteers. Sometimes satsang is given by patients who have a particular area of expertise. Patients who are interested in hearing more about a certain subject matter attend, and in this way knowledge, practical skill and wisdom is generated and shared generously.

Every week, there is a garden walk where the different medicinal plants are identified and their properties are discussed; many patients find this additionally helpful, or healing, because the medicinal qualities of these very plants is facilitating their return to health.

In addition, each week a presentation about the community work done by the Punarnava Volunteers is given. This is important because Vaidyagrama is a very unique Ayurveda Hospital. Here the focus is on providing Ayur Aroghya Soukhya to everyone in the community; this includes the wider community of people from the surrounding villages. The patients are thus able to see that their support helps to create wellness not only personally but also in the community as a whole.



Natural farming

Vaidyagrama Community Trust is very proud of its coconut farm, which has around 120 coconut trees. Around 1300 coconuts are harvested every 40–50 days. These are used in the Vaidyagrama kitchen as well as Annam Kitchen, which serves lunch for 100 or more destitute and needy older people from the surrounding villages.

Punarnava Trust laborers also planted bottle gourd, white and red pumpkin, tomatoes okra, green chillis, eggplant, papaya



As you can see, the reward of the love and trust invested in the Garden is very visible!



Diwali Celebration at Vaidyagrama

Diwali, the festival of lights is a special day in Vaidyagrama. The entire hospital is lit with small lamps by the staff and patients.

One of the stories about Diwali is that it commemorates the return of Lord Rama, together with Sita and Lakshman, from fourteen-years of exile where he vanquished the demon-king Ravana. In joyous celebration of the return of their king, the people of Ayodhya illuminated the kingdom with earthen diyas (oil lamps) and burst crackers.



Dhanwantari Jayanti and National Ayurveda Day Celebration (28th October 2016)

Dhanwantari, the reincarnation of Vishnu, is known as the God of Medicine. Bhagavata Purana tells us that Dhanvantari appeared with the pot of Amrita (nectar) during the Sagara Mathana, while the ocean was being churned by the Devas and Asuras. This pot of Amrita was snatched by the Asuras. Subsequently another avatar, Mohini, appeared and rescued the nectar back from the Asuras. It is believed that it was Lord Dhanvantari who first promulgated the practise of Ayurveda.

This year, the Government of India has decided to celebrate Dhanwantari Jayanti as National Ayurveda Day, with particular emphasis on treatment of Diabetes.

At Vaidyagrama, we too celebrated Dhanwantari Jayanti with a Dhanwantari homam which was attended by all the patients, who thus received the blessings of our Lord Dhanwantari.



Saturday Group Dinners at Vaidyagrama

Every Saturday, the patients of Vaidyagrama are invited to attend a group dinner. Patients sit together and have their food served to them, amidst much chatter, fun and laughter. After the dinner, the Medical directors lead an informal entertainment program. The guests join in singing songs, telling jokes, and ‘pulling each other’s legs’. Dr Ramadas and Dr Ramanandan also sing with the patients, much to everyone’s delight. These evenings are so popular with some patients, that there can often be elaborate preparation of songs and skits before the Saturday event. It is a highlight of the week at Vaidyagrama!



Narayaneeyam

This month Narayaneeyam recital on November 24, 2016 was very special. Lord Guruvayurappan's beautiful idol was made especially for the occasion. The leader of the Narayaneeyam team, Ms Lalitha, who has been ailing for many months, surprised everyone with her presence, despite needing a wheelchair and using crutches. The puja was well attended.



Balagrama Garden

The Balagrama garden, planted lovingly by Shri Ravikumar, is being beautifully maintained by the staff of Punarnava Trust. The Kitchen construction has begun on earnest and the foundation work is now complete. The licensing work needed to secure permission to start the children's home is on-going. As soon as the licensing work is complete, the children will join us to live at Balagrama. We look forward to the day!



Sharing joy with the blind (14th November)

Ramar is a blind person in Masithi Goundenpathi in Thirumalayampalayam Panchayat. He informed us that a group of blind people belonging to the Blind Association in Coimbatore have a request for us to provide sweaters for the winter season. Well-wishers from Bank of India sponsored the sweaters and these were handed over on November 14th, 2016 to the beneficiaries at the Saibaba Temple at Chavadi. The temple authorities provided food to everyone.



Self-Reliance in power needs

Another feather in Vaidyagrama's cap is of becoming energy self-reliant. Vaidyagrama has commissioned the installation of a 30kw on-grid solar system that will make the healing village completely energy self-reliant!!!! This is indeed a great milestone in our development as a self-sufficient healing village.



Staff Day celebration – Glimpses



Diwali eve was the day designated for celebrating the staff day at Vaidyagrama. Preparations started many weeks in advance, the girls and boys with their dance practice and boys with the sports practice.

26 October 2016 was a busy day at Vaidyagrama, because many new patients came in. In spite of this, every one of the staff finished their work in time for the sumptuous lunch served lovingly by themselves to each other!! Thereafter the program started. Since the staff was busy serving lunch, the patients had already gathered at Mandapam for the program at 2.pm. We played a little game of musical chairs for the patients, which Mr Martin won. Once the staff arrived, the official lamp lighting was done by veteran staff from each department of Vaidyagrama and guests.

Our chief priest sang the devotional song and opened the function. Everyone participated with much energy and loud applause was heard each time someone performed. Finally, the indoor program ended at 5 pm with the prize distribution. Then the outdoor activities near the temple commenced. Kabaddi, tug of war, lemon and spoon race, breaking the hanging pot blind folded etc were played enthusiastically by each and every staff, and many prizes were won. And lost!

Cookery Corner – Coconut Rice Dal Dumplings

Picture and article courtesy – Ms Laura Plumb

Recipe courtesy – Ms Kavitha



Dumplings

- 2–3 Teaspoons coconut oil
- 1 Teaspoon mustard seeds
- 1/3 cup onion, chopped
- 1 Teaspoon ginger, chopped
- 1 small handful curry leaves
- 2 cups rice flour
- 1 cup boiled water
- 1/2 cup coconut, flaked or shredded
- 1/4 cup split mung beans (mung dal)
- 1–2 pinches pink or rock salt

Coconut Chutney

- 1/2 c coconut, flaked or shredded
- 1 ginger slice
- 3–4 curry leaves
- pinch pink or rock salt
- 1/4 c water
- 1 pinch mustard seeds

Melt 1 tablespoon coconut oil in a sauté pan over a medium heat. Add mustard seeds and pop. Immediately add the onion and stir. Next add the ginger, and stir together about 1 minute. Stir in the curry leaves. While the spice mixture sautés, pour about a cup of hot water into the rice flour and mix. Add the coconut to the spice mixture. Stir for another minute or two, until the onions are translucent and just before the coconut toasts. Fold into the rice flour. In your same sauté pan, melt another tablespoon coconut oil and stir in the mung dal. Stir continuously until the dal is a lovely golden brown, then fold into the rice mixture. If it is too dry, add water slowly until it is moist and all blends together well.

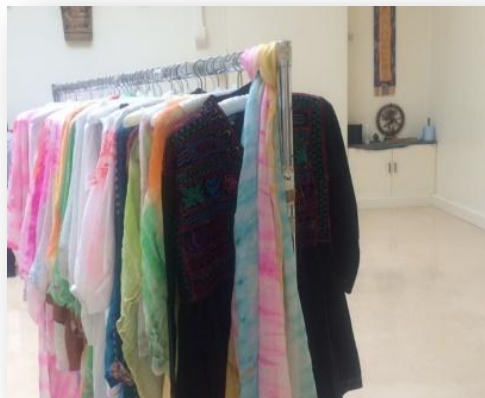
With a dab of coconut oil, oil your hands. Take a handful of the rice mixture and shape into ovals or rounds. Place these on a steamer tray and steam for ten minutes. Meanwhile, make the coconut chutney: Put all the ingredients in a blender and mix until smooth. Add more water if needed for a creamy consistency. Scoop into a serving bowl. Put the remaining oil into your pan, sauté the mustard seeds. Once they pop, spoon them into the coconut chutney. After ten minutes, remove the dumplings from the steamer and arrange them on a platter. Serve with coconut chutney.

Fundraising at Home and Abroad

18th September 2016 Pop Up Sale at 'The Life Centre Yoga Studio' in London, UK

At Punarnava Trust, we are so grateful to our supporters and well-wishers both in India and abroad for supporting us in our work with our community. Year after year, Vaidyagrama family members engage in fund raising activities in their home countries, raising funds which in turn provide the much needed resources for our community work.

This year Emily Reed, a Vaidyagrama Family Member who lives in London, organized a Pop up Sale at the Life Centre in London. The Life Centre is a very busy Yoga Studio in Central London, where Emily teaches. The sale, of clothes and food, was held on September 18, 2017. GBS 300 was raised in total, and was generously donated to Punarnava Trust for its work in the Community. A heart felt thank you to Emily for all her hard work and devotion to Punarnava over the years.



How you can support

If you feel you want to be a part of this vision, and would like to contribute to its realisation, here are some ways you can help:-

- **The Daily Annaam**—meals to poor project, Rs 2000/- (USD 40/- or Euro 35/-)
- **Community Natural Farming** by donating USD 100/- providing livelihood for families
- Monthly free **Medical Camp** (and feed an entire village) USD 300/- (Feeding USD 200/-+ Cost of medicines USD 100/-)
- Eye Camp for 150 elderly - Rs 26000/- (USD 450/-) bi-monthly.
- **Children's Home** kitchen construction and equipment- Rs 18,00,000 (USD 35,000)
- You can **Donate Your Skills**: graphic designers, content writers, publishers, educators, engaging social media, and publicity are all needed.
- **Spread the Message** to your 10 Best Friends:

How to donate (at www.punarnava.org)

For Indian Donors:-

Our Bank details are

Indian Overseas Bank, Nanjundapuram branch, Coimbatore

Account number 174602000005107 of Punarnava Ayurveda Trust.

IFSC code- IOBA0001746

SWIFT-IOBAINBB020

For International Donors:-

Citi Bank, Tristar Towers, Avinashi Road, Coimbatore India

Account number-0100768429 Punarnava Ayurveda Trust

IFSC code-CITI0000011

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Punarnava Ayurveda Trust is registered under Section 11 (1) of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), 2010, and hence is eligible to receive International donations for the said purpose.

Donations to Punarnava Ayurveda Trust by Indian donors are eligible for tax exemption under Section 81 G of the Income Tax act.

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